

# ATLANTIC GUARDIAN

THE MAGAZINE OF NEWFOUNDLAND



IN THIS ISSUE:

- IRON UNDER THE SEA
- THE GOOD OLD DAYS
- TEACHERS GO TO SCHOOL

VOL. VIII, No. 9

SEPT. 1951

R. SHEPHERD

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### Atlantic Guardian's Platform

- To make Newfoundland better known at home and abroad;
- To promote trade and travel in the Island;
- To encourage development of the Island's natural resources;
- To foster good relations between Newfoundland and her neighbors.

# Atlantic Guardian

## THE MAGAZINE OF NEWFOUNDLAND

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Cover Photo (South River, Clarkes Beach)  
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by **BRIAN CAHILL**

● We want to start the column off right this month by having everybody first of all pause and dwell a while upon the picture herewith.



The young lady facing you and smiling so beautifully is Miss Lillian

SEPTEMBER, 1951

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**St. John's Newfoundland**

Skanes of Bell Island and she is, according to a usually reliable comrade of ours named John Noel, who is manager of the C.N.R. Press Bureau in Montreal, a mermaid.

The Mountie is just a Mountie. A nice fellow, no doubt, but not germane to the present issue.

Miss Skanes, we understand, got to be a mermaid at the Shediac Lobster Festival held at Shediac, New Brunswick, this summer. Mr. Noel, who knows we are always interested in things pertaining to Newfoundland, sent us along the picture the other day with the rather cryptic additional information that she was carried from the sea by King Neptune."

We are grateful to Mr. Noel, and of course to Miss Skanes and King Neptune, for a decorative picture and a nice little story.

● We have an interesting and self-explanatory letter now from B. H. Shears of Bowring Brothers Limited.

"In your June issue, Mr. Brian Cahill under "Guardian Angles" referred to a letter received from Mr. Richard Watson of Baltimore, Md., and to a photograph said to have been taken on the sealer "Eagle" in 1897.

"There were two 'Eagles' owned by Bowring Brothers Limited.

"Eagle' No. 1 was sealing from 1871 to 1893 inclusive and was lost on 1st September, 1893, while whaling in the Davis Straits in the Arctic. Captain Arthur Jackman was in command from 1887 to 1893 inclusive.

"Eagle' No. 2 was built in 1902 in Sandefjord, Norway, and was owned by Bowring Brothers Limited from 1904 to 1950 when she was sunk with honors outside St. John's Harbor on Sunday, July 23rd. Her foreign name was 'Sophie'.

**ATLANTIC GUARDIAN**

"It would seem that the photograph printed in the "Guardian" must have been taken in some year other than 1897 as this was too late for "Eagle" No. 1 but not late enough for "Eagle" No. 2. In 1897 Captain Arthur Jackman was in command of the 'Aurora' another of Bowring's sealers. She was sold in 1911, and then went on the Antarctic Expedition under Sir Douglas Manson. She is referred to in his book entitled "The Home of the Blizzard."

"The younger gentleman pictured could not have been Mr. Eric A. Bowring as he did not return to the St. John's office of Bowring Brothers Limited until 1908.

"I find that the "Hector" about which Mr. Watson inquired was owned by Messrs. Job Brothers & Co. Limited from 1871 to 1891 under that name and later in the latter year after being rebuilt she was named the "Diana" and prosecuted the sealfishery until 1922 when she was lost on 27th March, 85 miles east of Baccalieu Island.

"Mr. Fred Hayward mentioned as one of those in the group died on 29th April, 1946 The writer, when he joined Bowring Brothers Ltd., served under Mr. Hayward who was then Secretary and Cashier of the firm.

"The few facts put together in this letter may be of interest to Mr. Watson and I am indebted for my information to the well-known Chafe's Sealing Book, and "The Wooden Walls Among The Ice Floes" written in 1933 by Major Howe Greene, O.B.E., F.R.I.B.A. and late of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

"Faithfully yours,

B. H. SHEARS.

- That's it for this month.

*Brian Cahill*

SEPTEMBER, 1951

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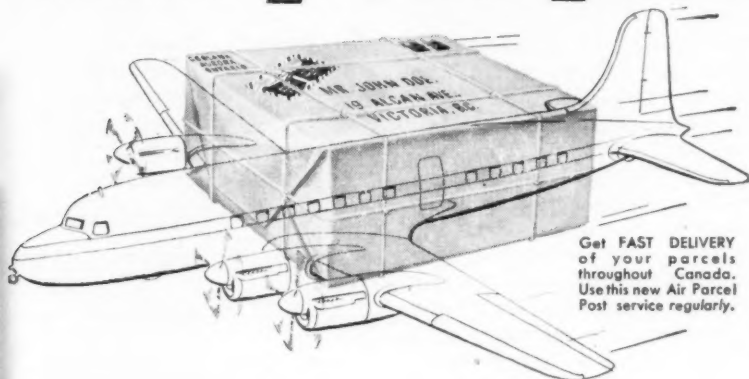
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## • *It's Nice To Be Home*

AS these lines are written—in the editorial "sanctum" of the new Guardian Associates — Guardian Press publishing and printing plant at the east end of Water Street in the old city of St. John's—the sound and throb of printing presses can be heard and felt, and it is sweet music indeed to the ears of those of us who have long dreamed and worked for the day when ATLANTIC GUARDIAN would be written, produced and printed under one roof in Newfoundland.

True, it was the July issue that represented the actual realization of the dream, and of course the August issue was also produced in our own Newfoundland plant. But in those hectic days of re-organization we were all too much concerned with getting magazines out to start shouting about the achievement that at times seemed almost impossible and was, in actual fact, a touch-and-go affair, what with having to bring in all the way from Toronto and Boston and Montreal and Chicago hundreds of packages of machinery and, from Sackville, N.B., all the cuts and standing type of ads and headings used in the publication of previous issues.

Somehow, however, it was done (even in the face of machinery damages suffered in transit). And now the September issue is on its way across Newfoundland and to various points around the world where Newfoundlanders in exile look to the magazine fondly from month to month "as a letter from home".

We like to feel that every one of our subscribers at home and abroad is interested in the home-coming of "the magazine of Newfoundland". For that reason, and because of our own pride in the accomplishment which is shared, we know, by the shareholders of the new enterprise who have helped to make it possible, we present on following pages a pictorial report on the new home of ATLANTIC GUARDIAN with some familiar and some new faces of A.G.'s happy family.



EWART YOUNG



This is the new home of Atlantic Guardian and associated enterprises—the Guardian Press Building located on Water Street East in St. John's, close to the historic spot where Sir Humphrey Gilbert took formal possession of Newfoundland, "the corner stone of Empire," in 1583. Formerly the Mechanics Hall, this spacious three-storey building has been completely renovated and equipped with the most modern printing machinery available. The gentleman adjacent is DOUGLAS W. SMITH, General Manager of Guardian Press Ltd.

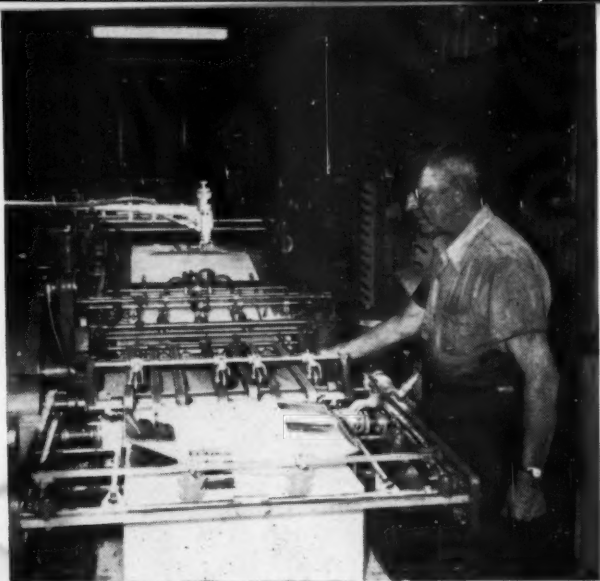




Heading the printing staff of Guardian Press is L. W. JANES (above), Plant Superintendent. ALBERT YOUNG (top right) is Composing Room Foreman. Others on this page pictured at work are: (right) VICTOR MURRIN, apprentice, and MALCOLM HAWKINS. Compositor; (bottom left) A. J. (JOE) SHAPTER, Chief Linotype Operator; (bottom right) JOHN QUINN, Linotype Operator.

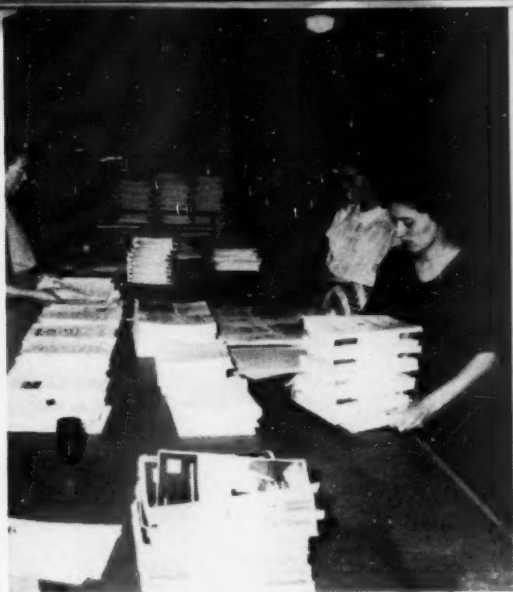






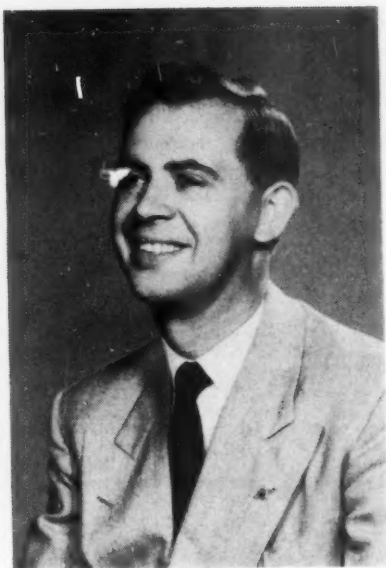
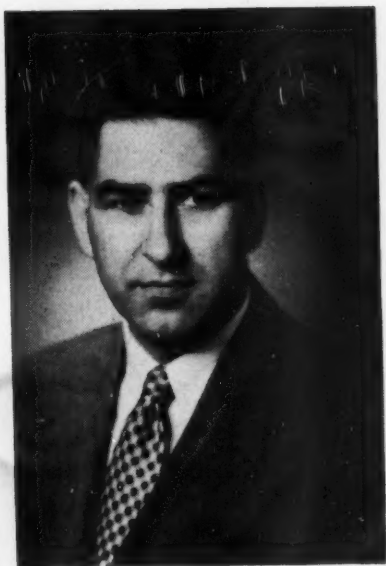
Boss of the Guardian pressroom is **LOUIS J. CARROLL** (above) from Toronto, shown operating the speedy Miller Press. **BILL WHITE** (lower left) is the operator of the big L. & M. Press, and **GEORGE EVANS** (lower right), has charge of the snappy Heidelberg.





In the Guardian Bindery Department, Forelady is ALICE LEONARD (left), with assistants JOAN BUTLER and VERA HUSSEY. Operator of the Chandler & Price Automatic Cutter is ROY THOMAS. In charge of Circulation records and mailing is MRS. VIOLET YOUNG (below).





**J. H. (HIB) SAUNDERS** (top left) holds forth in the Guardian Montreal office as Business Manager. Advertising Manager is **E. C. BOONE** (top right). The little lady at the desk is **BERNICE HOLLAHAN**, Book-keeper. Janitor is **CLAYTON ROSE**.



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(Continued from page 31)

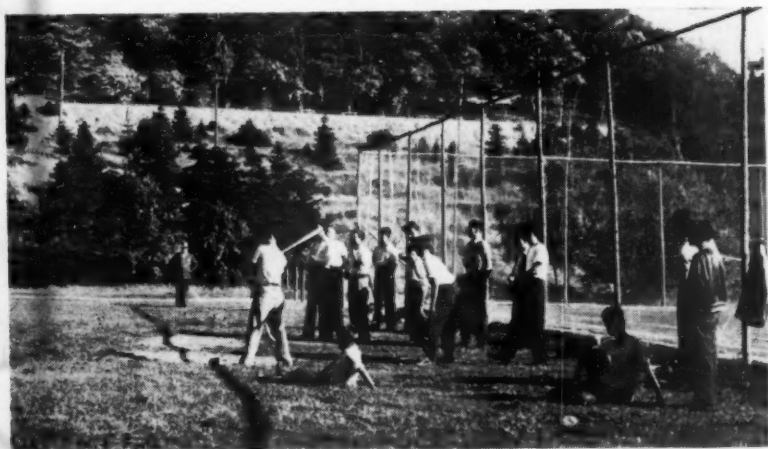
chorus, their words of remembrance—

"Because we live in a beautiful land;

Because we wish to know  
And to teach its wonders  
Of plant and flower, of insect and bird,

Of rock and star, of sea and soil;  
Because he has helped us to know  
And to love all things of Nature,  
Therefore we cherish in gratitude  
The memory of Francis A.  
Bruton."

Before the picnic lunch, a sports session is the order of the day—girls' baseball on the green behind the lodge, and boys' baseball on the grounds between the swimming pool — and, of course, swimming for anyone who had come armed with a bathing suit! Winding up to knock the ball over the fence, right, is Olive Pelley, personable young teacher from Botwood.

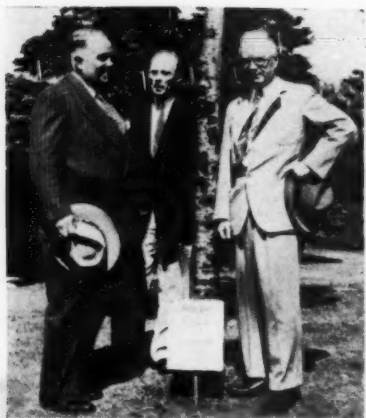


SEPTEMBER, 1951



Along the main thoroughfare, up and down the picturesque bridges of Bowring Park and through the greenhouse with its hothouse plants and flowers—the Nature Ramble just about covers the whole of Bowring Park from caribou to cantalope. (While some of this year's visitors thought one of the kingsized tomatoes would look well in a salad, and one of the more exotic blooms would make fine as a table center, the only souvenirs that the teachers took away with them were slightly sun-tanned noses, and snap-shots for their photograph albums!)





Present-day members of Memorial University staff inspect the "Bruton Tree"—Professor A. M. Fraser, Summer School Director (left), Professor Eli Lear who delivered this year's memorial address (center) and Dr. A. G. Hatcher, president and vice-chancellor.

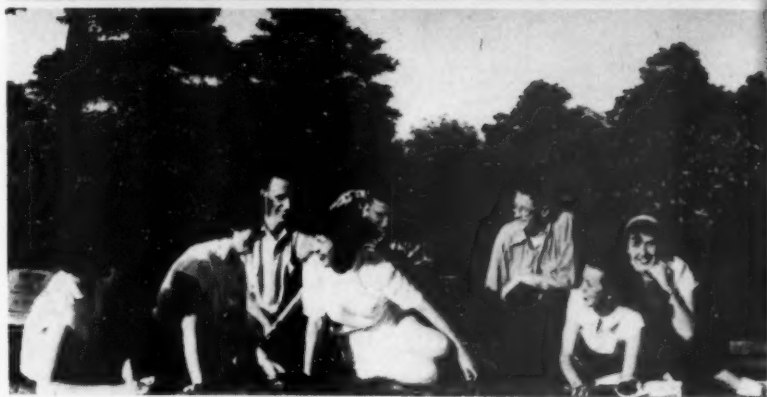


Always a special occasion, the Ramble attracts its share of distinguished visitors, as well as the summer school teachers. Here, Mrs. Hatcher points out an unusual Newfoundland flower to Senator Vincent P. Burke, Dr. Hatcher and Mrs. Burke.

First point on the program is always the Memorial Service at Dr. Bruton's tree (below), with the teacher-students grouped around it. From there, the group moves off to the Peter Pan statue by the lake, and then on to the different examples of native Newfoundland trees. Top, left, Superintendent Harry Hamlyn stops his 'conducted tour' at the copper beech planted by Viscount Alexander, and points out the plaque for the benefit of Gerard Kirby. Point May, Lamaline, and Bernice Drake, Ellen's Island, Lamaline. At the end of the tour, it is just plain 'time off from school' for the teachers (bottom, left).







# Nature Rambles Through Bowring Park

## Marked by Memorial Tribute to Dr. Bruton

Photostory by ADELAIDE LEITCH

THE school room moves out of doors once a year in St. John's, when three to four hundred young teachers put away their books and rulers, don slacks and summer clothes, and ramble along the Nature Trail at Bowring Park.

Summer School at Memorial University has been doing it for nearly a quarter of a century now, and the mid-summer outing at the park has become as much a part of the curriculum as readin', 'ritin' and 'rithmetic.

It all began with an Englishman, Dr. F. A. Bruton, who took one look at Newfoundland's out-of-doors, found it good, and decided to devote his summers to studying it—and, incidentally, to bringing it to the attention of Newfoundlanders themselves. He first came out from England in 1926—and returned each year after that—until his death in January, 1930—to teach more students at more summer schools.

The Bowring Park Nature Rambles were his idea originally and, after school itself closed for the season, he used to stay on in Newfoundland, touring the country with his notebooks and pencils, studying the bird islands, the beaches, the plant and animal life on this so-called "barren island."

Each year since, in Dr. Bruton's memory, a special out-of-doors service is held around the young beech tree planted by his students as a reminder of the man who, as Professor Eli Lear said in this year's memorial address, saw that "a tree was a shrine."

Newfoundland Weather always co-operates on the Nature Rambles—so say the officials of Memorial University—and 1951 was right in line. There were clear skies and a frolicking wind, and Bowring Park had on its best bib and tucker for the occasion. Led by park superintendent Harry Hamlyn, the young teachers inspected all Bowring Park's points of interest from the famous caribou to the name tags on the trees, and topped it all off with a field day for sports and a picnic lunch.

Summer School at Memorial University brings together teachers from all over the island—from home-town of St. John's to Port aux Basques, from Placentia to Twillingate and points north. On the day they take over Bowring Park each year, they pay tribute both to Newfoundland and to the man who made them Newfoundland-conscious as they repeat, in

(Continued on page 35)



## ***Teachers Go To School - Outdoors***

## When The Jewelry Man Came

Now of all the events of those long-ago days  
When I lived in that country of islands and bays  
The one that for me had both glamor and fame,  
Was that day, every year, when the jewelryman came.  
We would see him at first through a break in the grove  
Of spruce, where the road passed our house to the cove;  
We could tell it was him by the monstrous pack  
That he toted along from a stick on his back.  
And when he'd turn in at our old garden gate,  
Sure the cattle'd stare, and the biddies 'ud prate;  
And Ma, who'd be making a tart for the fair,  
Would tidy her apron and brush back her hair;  
While Willie and Myrtle, and Lucy and me  
Would rush to the door in a tumult of glee.  
Then Ma would spread down on the big kitchen floor,  
A mat that she'd hooked twenty winters before,  
While the peddler alert on the edge of his chair  
Would promptly proceed to exhibit his ware.  
Now ye gods of Olympus, ye kings of Irak,  
What a mixture of goods in that jewelryman's pack!  
There were jewsharps and buttons, tin whistles and glue;  
Coral beads from the Indies, and mouth organs too;  
There was lace and embroidery, and perfume so rare  
One drop on a hankie would last for a year.  
Now money was scarce as the bones in a squid,  
And Pa was reluctant to part with one quid;  
But a glance at us children with tears in our eyes  
As we tenderly fondled some coveted prize;  
And he'd empty his pockets of all his loose cash,  
Together with fishhooks and frankum and trash;  
And then with what money Ma had in the jug  
He'd set it all down on that old kitchen rug.  
And the peddler would count it, then figure, and swear  
That the goods cost him more than the money was there.  
But Pa, he'd manoeuvre, and banter, and trade,  
And plead and persist 'till a bargain was made.  
Then we'd all sit her down to a good honest meal  
Of fish and potatoes—a part of the deal;  
And that rascal would eat 'till he suddenly felt  
His belt-buckle leave the last hole in his belt.  
And then with a gesture that seemed to deplore  
The fact that he hadn't the room to stow more,  
He'd up and away on his well beaten track,  
With more cargo in front, but less weight on his back.

—GEORGE H. SMITH.

shoes, and used the fanciest words. His far-off outpost certainly had none of these things. Yes, thought Silas, life at home was harder, much harder.

As the days went by, and the sun still shone, and the flowers bloomed apace, there crept into the mind of Silas Brown a silent conflict between home and present surroundings. And the longer he stayed the more beautiful grew the plain. At last, with a shrug, he sought out the proprietor and announced his decision to stay in these parts. He asked for advice as to work.

Silas was assured there was work for all, and with little ceremony the thing was done. He wrote to his brothers of all this, told them the climate was killing them, and settled in. The month, as I have said, was May.

By June the sun hung in the sky. Silas felt it fastened on the back of his neck as he bent to his labors. No breath of wind stirred the dry air.

Curious changes, too, overtook the boarding house. The excellent food grew less palatable. The flowers appeared to wilt, and the big, gilt-framed pictures looked faded and tired.

July turned out a killer. Dust rose from the baked earth and spread over the plain, so that even the hardened westerners cursed their luck. To make matters worse, Silas was having trouble with the cutlery. He used his fish fork for meat, and ate dessert with his soup spoon, while his companions smiled in their sleeves.

The poor Newfoundlander, by August, was ready to drop. He

could scarcely breathe for dust, and gasped his way from day to day. On the 16th of the month he sent straight off for the doctor, who gave Silas a superlative overhaul.

"Tell me, my good man," said the doctor finally, "how long have you been in this part of the country?"

Silas thought a moment. He'd been there since around May, he told the doctor worriedly. And he had come from Newfoundland where he had been a fisherman.

The doctor closed his bag with a snap.

"Aha!" he said, eyeing the invalid Newfoundlander. "That explains it! My prescription to you is—go home, young man! Just go home!" Surprised, Silas did as he was told. They carried him home on a stretcher but, as his brothers carried him along to their little house, Silas suddenly raised his head, sniffing the salt Newfoundland air.

"Why . . . I'm better now, boys!" he exclaimed. "I do think I'll get out and walk!"

The doctor was right—it was a matter of climate!

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# ***A Matter of Climate***

## **A Short Story**

by **PAUL MAHER**

SILAS was one of these men to be seen anywhere in a Newfoundland outport, a stocky fellow of no great to-do, wringing a living from the sea in summer, and in winter existing as best he could. Honest down to his boots, caring nothing for the world outside, and little more for tomorrow, he toiled without tiring, and chewed tobacco for fun. On Sundays he went to church.

One day, over a boiled duff, he said to his two brothers: "Boys, it's time I spent what I got upstairs. I'm gonna take a holiday." He packed his bag and took his cash and struck out for the States. It was autumn when he went away. The ridge of the hills he left behind glowed golden and rust in the sky.

In a short space of time Silas reached St. John's and, bewildered though he was with this world outside his ken, took passage for America.

He had never been away from home before. A loneliness filled him, and he looked in vain for a familiar face. He got off the boat at Boston, hugged his money, and took a train to the west. Silas had heard about this marvellous West, of its scenery, its fertile earth, its glowing climate. He intended to stop somewhere out there and have

a look around. The savings should last a month.

Finally, after beating about a bit, a place took his fancy, and he settled in a small boarding house. The plains outside stretched away like the sea, and the May sun was as hot as a blast furnace.

Silas marvelled endlessly. The boarding house, with hot and cold running water and a maid to make his bed struck him dumb. It had carpet on the stairs, flowers all over the place, while from the walls hung framed pictures as large as life.

Perhaps the meal table was the crowning glory. This seated ten, and there seemed to be no end to the knives and forks. It took Silas a week to sort out the business of eating.

One day, a fortnight later, Silas was approached by the proprietor, a burly man of sixty or so.

"I understand you are from Newfoundland," said this gentleman, "I hope you are enjoying your stay?" Silas said he was. "Although I know nothing of your country," went on the proprietor, "I hear it is an unhealthy place, with a bad climate and little sun." Silas assured him things were not so, and on this the conversation ended.

But Silas got to thinking. First a little, then a lot. Here the earth seemed to yield crops almost without human effort. Here the men shaved every morning, wore shiny



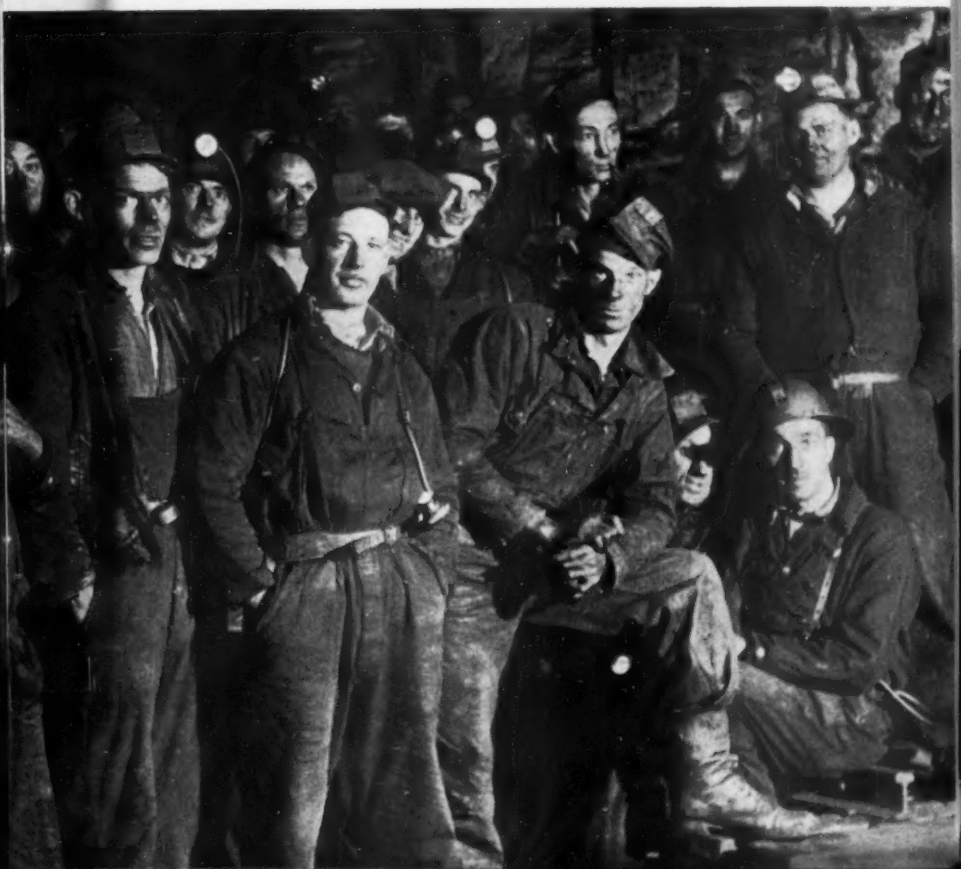


Diesel trucks carrying 22 tons of ore at a time are now in use at Bell Island to bring the mineral to the loading piers, replacing the old cable cars. Changes are taking place in all the surface operations as well as deep below the sea-bed as increasing demands in the steel industry and dwindling ore reserves elsewhere bring boom times to the Iron Isle.





Bell Island's hardy miners have long been working under the sea to get the valuable mineral out, and now the Dominion Steel and Coal Corporation is putting in a rubber railroad, said to be "the longest slope belt conveyor system in the world," which will replace the former pulley-drawn ore trucks. When the present program of modernization and expansion is completed ore production will be boosted to 2,800,000 tons annually, and Bell Island will have just about the most modern mining system in the world.





Some 2,000 miners are presently employed at the Wabana ore operations, and it is expected there will be jobs for 500 more when the improvements and extensions are completed. DOSCO'S yearly wage bill will be hiked to around \$7 millions.



## NEWFOUNDLAND ALBUM

### *Ore Under The Sea*

Bell Island is enjoying its biggest boom since ore was first mined at Newfoundland's famed "Iron Isle" in Conception Bay some fifty years ago. Sparked by substantial new orders for iron ore from England, Germany, and DOSCO's own steel mills at Sydney, N.S., an elaborate program of streamlining Bell Island's undersea mines is well under way.



will suffice for the present as it contains most of the poems in the dozen or so volumes now bearing his name.

Unfortunately when we turn to creative writing, we find that a great many talented authors never did see their compositions in book form. Names like Dan Carroll and R. G. MacDonald come to mind, the later being represented by a small booklet. Poets in the vernacular are few. Florence Miller's "In Caribou Land" should hold a prominent place on the Newfoundland Bookshelf, and The Newfoundlander at War has had his chronicler in Capt. Jack Turner of World War I.

Fiction is still in its early stages. The short story has barely been considered as a form of expression for Newfoundland authors. The novel's first serious exponent is the contemporary writer Margaret Duley whose "Cold Pastoral" and "Highway to Valour" are pretty well first-class examples of what can be done.

Fiction and poetry lean heavily on traditional phraseology, anecdotes and incidents. Newfoundland's store of such matter is unlimited, and, for the most part, uncollected. However, antiquarians like P. K. Devine did a great service in recording much of it. His "Old St. John's" and "Old King's Cove" must not be relegated to a back-place on the Bookshelf. A conspicuous place should also be made for "Ballads and Sea Songs of Newfoundland" a painstaking and sympathetic recording of old Newfoundland airs and lyrics by two American women, Elizabeth Greenleaf and Grace Mansfield, mem-

bers of the Vassar College Folklore Expedition of 1929. The book was published by the Harvard University Press in 1933.

This has been, inevitably, a sketchy outline of the books on the Newfoundland Bookshelf, dealing specifically with published works. It is utterly impossible, in a short article, to attempt a critical assessment of all the Newfoundland literature, creative or otherwise, that has been written.

However, a brief reference should be made to Labrador literature which is very extensive, and can better be considered as a separate subject. Inevitably, it followed the general formula of Newfoundland writing: first the explorers, and the missionaries, then the sportsmen, and finally the professionals.

Among the earliest books may be named the "Journal" of Captain George Cartwright, an English Army Officer in the last quarter of the 18th century; among the most interesting from the pens of clerics and sportsmen may be named "Where the Fishers Go" (1909) by Rev. P. W. Browne, and "Through Trackless Labrador" (1911) by H. H. Pritchard. Mainland professionals like Norman Duncan and Dillon Wallace created fictional characters like "Billy Topsail," "The Ragged Inlet Guards" and "Doctor Luke" who became almost household words. On the scene, too, came a real-life "Doctor Luke" in the person of Dr. Wilfrid Grenfell of the International Grenfell Association, who, in addition to his ministrations, found time to write many books which we must add to any Newfoundland and Labrador bookshelf.

and a half ago. Archdeacon Wix's "Journal" of a six-month visit to the south coast, published in 1835, is an excellent example of that type of literature. The history of Newfoundland, an unknown story hitherto, was studied by the Rev. Charles Pedley, Rev. Moses Harvey, Rev. Louis Anspach, Rev. Philip Tocque, and Archbishop Howley in a way that it had never been considered before. The first three were straight historians; the latter two, students of tradition and folklore. Tocque's "Wandering Thoughts" and Howley's "Newfoundland Namelore" are a treasure-house of Newfoundland matter.

Archbishop Michael Francis Howley (1843-1914) was, in fact, the literary giant of the last century. A poet and historian, he will hold a high place in any study of Newfoundland literature. His "Collected Poems" and "Ecclesiastical History" are literary landmarks.

While the clerics were making their contribution, another kind of writer was doing his bit for the island colony—the scientific explorer. The first of these in time and merit was a Newfoundlander, W. E. Cormack, who, in 1822, crossed the island from east to west. The narrative of his journey, which was inspired by the humanitarian motive of trying to establish friendly relations with the remnants of the aborigines, is a notable achievement of learning and literature. Its sequel and complement came in the 1840's, the two volumes of "Excursions in Newfoundland" written by J. B. Jukes, the first Geological Surveyor of Newfoundland. A successor of Jukes, J. P. Howley, spent forty years, from the 1870's

to the First World War in compiling an exhaustive and erudite history of the Beothuck Indians, extinct now for at least a hundred years. It has been called the "greatest labor of love" in our literature.

The only thing that can compare with it in size and thoroughness is the monumental "History of Newfoundland" published by Judge D. W. Prowse in 1895. Despite its obvious defects as a history, Prowse's work remains to this day the 'definitive' history of Newfoundland till almost the turn of this century. More recent volumes have appeared, but they are mainly inadequate text-books or concentrated studies of special periods or aspects, such as "Newfoundland: Economic, Diplomatic and Strategic Studies" (1946) Editor, R. A. McKay.

Along with the explorers and the churchmen, there were the sports writers, not to be confused with their modern counterparts. Such men as A. Radclyffe Dugmore who made a fascinating study of the Newfoundland caribou with a camera, and J. G. Millais, who did likewise with his brush and palette, made a noteworthy contribution to our pictorial literature. Dugmore's "Romance of the Newfoundland Caribou" (1913) and Millais' "Newfoundland and Its Untrodden Ways" (1907) are books of distinction worthy of a place on our Newfoundland Bookshelf.

If Archbishop Howley was the first of the native poets, then Dr. E. J. Pratt is certainly the greatest, and his published works must occupy a considerable portion of our Bookshelf. His "Collected Verse"

# **Newfoundland Bookshelf**

by MICHAEL HARRINGTON

**D**ESPITE the few 'superior' people who look down their noses at what it holds, the "Newfoundland Bookshelf" is a lengthy one. Its origins, if we want to be particular, go back a long time into history, for in actual fact, the Icelandic sagas are the first Newfoundland literature, and the Viking tales the first epics of this island in the west.

We might include on it, all the letters and pamphlets written about the New Isle from the time of the landfall of Cabot to the chronicle of Sir Humphrey Gilbert's ill-fated voyage, and they are many; not to speak of the glamorous accounts set down by various Patentees in the early 17th century, who did a first-class press-agent's job (though an unsuccessful one) in trying to attract settlers to their plantations.

We ought to begin, though, with a reference to "A Discourse of Newfoundland" written by that doughty old sea-dog, Sir Richard Whitbourne, who fought against the Spanish Armada. Dated 1622, it is a rare book, and very expensive today. Though a more hard-headed approach than most of the contemporary works, it is celebrated for a description of an encounter with a mermaid! It antedated the first creative work of literature in Newfoundland by a few years with respect to publication dates, though probably written concurrently. The creative work was a volume of poetry which appeared in 1628, was written at Harbor Grace by Richard Hayman sometime Governor of John Guy's plantation. The

title of the book was "Quodlibets lately come over from New Britaniola, old Newfoundland . . ." and was a better job of tourist propaganda than literature.

A new attitude however soon sprang up with regard to the new colony. From 1650 to the 1800's literary production consisted mainly of a series of documents from Naval officers parroting the official line—from monopolists like the head of the East India Company and their hirelings, directed to impeding settlement. And although apologists for the colony were few and far between, it weathered the storm and the 19th century brought a new outlook, opening up new horizons.

By that time, religious freedom had arrived and political freedom was close at hand. Immigration was on the increase, education and schools were becoming established, the first 'newspaper' was issued in 1807, and the political pamphleteer and the literary churchman came on the scene.

The literature of Newfoundland owes a great debt to the clergy of all denominations. They spent much time on personal diaries, and excellent narratives of their visits to their scattered flocks; then, in whatever leisure time that remained they turned to poetry and the history and traditions of their adopted land.

Archdeacon Wix, Bishop Fleming, Bishop Feild, Bishop Mullock, left behind in letters and diaries a fascinating record of what the missionary had to undergo a century





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deon or a mouth-organ. The men stood at one side of the room and the women at the other, waiting for the music to begin. After several unsuccessful attempts, the "fiddler" would strike up a lively tune and the dance began.

There were different kinds of dances, and the number taking part depended upon the size of the room. While the dance was in progress, as many as possible would stand around the room in a circle watching the performance. At certain times the men stood opposite each other and danced, punctuating their dancing with a jump in the air coming down on the not too solid floor, making it shake, together with the dishes on the dresser. This doubtless gave to these dances the name "breaker downs." When the time came to swing the ladies an amusing thing would happen. Three or four old men, experts in the dance in their time, but now crippled with rheumatism, would occupy some prominent place in the room, and, as the men "swung" the women, these old men would shout at intervals, 'Whoop 'er up, Tom,' . . . 'Atta boy, Bill!' . . . 'Warm 'er up, Pat!' . . . 'Show 'em how, Dick!' As a result, they danced louder, swung the women faster and ended the set "pretty nigh exhausted." Another crowd of dancers then took the floor and the same performance was gone through until daylight, when the people dispersed declaring it was a "grand weddin'."

(Part II of "The Good Old Days" will describe 'the wakes' and 'the 'lections' — in October *Atlantic Guardian*).



### Newfie English

"What always amuses me," quoth the Mainlander, "is your use of 'wonderful' when you mean 'very'—The fishing is wonderful bad, for instance."

A twinkle lit the Newfoundlander's eye. "True," he drawled, "but you, on the other hand would say it was awfully good—same thing!"

### What's in the Wind?

Favorite snapshot in the album of a local St. John's-ite is a photo of a railway station in a high wind. Scattered about the platform, clothes blowing in all directions, hats about to take off in the breeze, are a dozen or so passengers, all of them looking as if they had just been dropped there by a capricious squall.

Plainly and aptly in view is the sign—COME-BY-CHANCE.

### Tut, tut, Halifax!

Any Haligonians caught in Newfoundland these days are looking just a trifle sheepish. Giving an advance notice of a meeting in the seaport city, a Halifax paper came out flat-footed recently and stated as gospel fact that one of the forthcoming visitors would be "that famous American poet—Dr. E. J. Pratt."

### Newfie-in-the-news

Newfoundland was well publicized abroad the past summer, what with *Coronet*, one of the continent's ultra-ultra-exclusive magazines running a story on the St. Lawrence Hospital, and another slick, *National Geographic*, devoting a whole section to a story and color pictures of a canoe trip through Labrador. Latest to cross our desk is a copy of the Barber-Ellis house organ, "*Cameo Courier*," with a full-length feature on "Newfoundland, Canada's Tenth Province," by Newfoundlander Eric Seymour.

ground. Windows were often broken by the concussion, and occasionally when some over-bold fellow had put in too many extra fingers of powder, the old musket rebelled and exploded with serious results. As a consequence quite a few hands in those days were minus a finger or two, lost at a wedding when the guns exploded. The groom and bride finally reached home smelling of gunpowder and too deaf with the noise of the exploding muskets to hear the congratulations of their friends.

It was customary to pay a small fee to the officiating clergyman. There were occasions, meanwhile, when all he got was a promise of payment. One clergyman tells of how, after officiating at one ceremony, the groom whispered in his ear, "I haven't any money for the fee, sir, but I'll pay you when the fish is dry in the fall." "Evidently," said the clergyman, telling the story thirty years afterwards, "that fish never got dry. At least I never got that fee."

On the return of the happy couple to the home, the wedding feast immediately began and lasted until about midnight. The usual toasts, customary in our day, were not drunk. However, quite a few of the men could be seen going to the woodshed or store in little groups for a drop from the bottle. It often happened that some pretty strait-laced old chap, not accustomed to drinking, would be persuaded by his companions to have a "nip." When he demurred he was reminded, "It's a weddin' me bey." One nip was often followed by another until the old chap was no

longer feeling his age. He would go in among the crowd to meet the angry gaze of his spouse. On more than one occasion, the happiness of the evening was marred by the old chap's wife putting on her clothes and going home alone. The reception the old chap got later on his arrival home can be more imagined than described. The women were practically all teetotalers and only an occasional one in the crowd had a spoonful or two of gin mixed with warm water, because it was, as one of them said, "good for the stomach."

At times, the men fortified from the liquid in the wood shed would, late in the evening, persuade someone in the party to put on something for a relish. Some good-natured soul would oblige by putting on some salt herring. A dispute arose at one wedding at the number of herring to be cooked. "Ah," said one old fellow, "why worry about that? If it's a weddin' let it be a weddin'—put on another salt herrin'!"

Usually around midnight the second part of the evening's festivities began, namely the dance. The tables, chairs, couches and every movable thing was put out of doors, the carpets rolled up, and the men removed their coats for an old-fashioned dance in the kitchen or living room.

These dances were generally called "breaker downs." Two things were necessary for their success—enough rum to make a few of the dancers merry, and a good fiddler. Why the latter was called by this name is uncertain, for he invariably played upon an accor-

## HAVE YOU A BABY-OF-THE-MONTH IN YOUR HOME ?



We're going to ear-mark this space every month exclusively for Newfoundland's younger fry—cute toddlers like David Ewart Boone, 17-month-old son of Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Boone of St. John's. David apparently sees something ve-r-r-y interesting 'way up yonder!' Send us in a picture of YOUR youngster and, if we like it, we'll print it here. A nice clear snapshot will do, provided you tell us a bit about the youngster—name, age, home address, what his interests are. We might even use a "cute saying" now and then too. Just address your entry to The Editor, Atlantic Guardian, 96 Water St., St. John's.

their waking hours in the fish store, or as we modern would say, "in the dog house."

Preparations for the wedding feast having been completed, things gradually got back to normal. The men folk were allowed back in the kitchen, with the warning admonition, however, that they were not to "mess things up" or get them "out of order."

The prospective groom had by this time made the trip to the headquarters of his priest or minister and completed all arrangements for the wedding ceremony. No printed invitations were sent out, but relatives of the soon-to-be bride or groom, with white ribbon or a flower in their lapels, went to every house in the community, and, regardless of class or creed invited all to the wedding.

Eventually the great day arrived. All activity as far as work was concerned ceased for at least two days. One day was devoted to the wedding festivities; the other was needed to recover from the effects. There was an air of expectancy and goodwill in the air. All who had flags flew them mast high that day. Those who did not possess flags, not to be outdone, went to the fence or flake and picked out a "longer." This was lashed to the garden fence and a bed-sheet or tablecloth hoisted to the breeze in honor of the event. The old muskets and 'swilin' guns' were taken from the rack, examined, loaded with an extra finger or two of powder, a cap was placed in position and a wad of oakum carefully placed between cap and firing cock

in preparation for the celebration which was to follow the marriage ceremony.

This was the day when most people in the village really dressed up. The men wore their best suits for the occasion. These suits were mostly well worn, their original colors faded with age, but they had previously been taken from the moth balls, brushed and hung out on the clothes line to "air." They wore also on this day, high, stiffly starched collars called "chokers," and, judging from how uncomfortable the men looked in them, they had been correctly named.

The ladies appeared in their "best bib and tuckers" consisting invariably of a black silk or satin dress, reaching to the tops of their high-laced boots. The drab effect of the dress was softened somewhat by a neat white collar around the neck. The head dress worn was "something out of this world." Usually the hat was large enough for an umbrella, set high on the head, trimmed with a stuffed bird, or peacock feathers. This was held in place by fancy large hatpins. These served a dual purpose of holding the hat firmly in place and that of a lethal weapon in case one's person were attacked by someone who had imbibed "too freely, but not too well."

The Church was usually packed to the doors and beyond. As soon as the knot had been securely tied, and the register signed, the pair emerged from the church to find young men and old lined up with muskets held in the air. Then began a period of cannonading that reminded one of an old-time battle

A WEDDING PARTY WAS REALLY SOMETHING IN

## *The Good Old Days*

by SAMUEL I. MURLEY

THE customs of any people are an interesting study. Especially is this true where the people live in little groups, isolated from the rest of the world. Few books, if any, have ever been written on the peculiar customs which were found in Newfoundland fifty or more years ago. In this article I shall endeavour to give a brief account of some of the things which made life fresh and interesting in the little village of Butler's Cove, now re-named Creston, on the west side of Placentia Bay.

We need to remember in the first place, that the people of our country are descended from the English, Scotch and Irish settlers who came to Newfoundland to fish. They formed little settlements by the sea in order that they might successfully carry on the fishery, near the close of the last century — they could have but little communication with the outside world. Each settlement, then, was a little world in itself.

We must not suppose, however, that the people found life dull and monotonous. On the contrary, life for them had many joys, and they found it worth living. Summer was for them the busiest season of the year, for it was then the harvest

of the sea had to be gathered in. Each Spring the settlement was a hive of industry. New boats had to be built, nets had to be tarred, and lines refitted for the fishery. And it was with a great deal of pleasure that they looked forward to the winter months.

Then the old-fashioned courtships began. The lover would spend much of his spare time at the home of his sweetheart, and after a few weeks or months of intensive courtship the wedding took place.

### **"Weddin's"**

The people looked forward with eagerness to the "Weddin's", for, of course, everyone in the settlement would be invited, and, this again meant a feast and a good time. A week or two before the wedding, preparations were begun on a large scale. The women of the house, together with relatives and neighbors, scrubbed and cleaned the house where the wedding was to be held, from top to bottom. The big kitchen, from morning till night, was a hive of activity as the wedding cakes were baked. The men of the house were told in no uncertain terms they were to keep out of the women's way while all these preparations were going on. They, therefore, spent most of



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## WOMAN OF THE MONTH

### *One-man-tourist-board*

**S**HE was christened Margaret Frances, but everyone calls her "Peg," so why should we be the first to challenge the tyranny of custom. And we would be the last to challenge the statement made by the Premier of Newfoundland to the Canadian Tourist Association's Annual Convention last year in Halifax — that "Peg" Godden is Newfoundland's "one man tourist board." Incidentally she was named a Director of the Association, a post which her twenty-four years' connection with the Tourist Trade in Newfoundland makes her well qualified to fill.

Recently, we understand, the Canadian Restaurant Association invited her to become a member of its Committee on Canadian Cuisine. As "Peg" might well put it in her witty, breezy way, it's so she'll know "What's Cookin'." From where we sit, "Peg" Godden not only knows "What's Cookin'," but "Who's Fishin'," where visitors can find "good huntin'" historical sites, and just places to relax. What's more, she can tell them how to get there, where to stay, what it will cost. These might be classified as incidents in the line of duty.

"Above and beyond the call of duty" may be listed such requests as those made by foreign writers on Newfoundland, who send their material to her to check: 'innocents abroad' who are on the time-honored search for an apartment; and, during World War II an Officers' Hospitality Bureau which



**"PEG" GODDEN**

found homes and arranged entertainment for over 1500 officers of the Royal Canadian Navy.

"Peg" Godden not only loves her job, she lives it too. It is with her waking and sleeping. She insists she has the most interesting job in Newfoundland, and the way she works at it should convince anyone she's not exaggerating. Part of her attachment to her work is the fact that she grew up with the Tourist Business for the Island.

Back in May, 1927, a young stenographer went to work with Capt. G. G. Byrne, then Secretary of the Newfoundland Tourist Association, which was run under the auspices of the Newfoundland Government by an appointed board of between nine and fifteen persons. A few months later when Capt. Byrne resigned to enter politics, "Peg" Godden was appointed

secretary, and her difficult task of promoting Newfoundland as a tourist paradise on a very meagre budget had begun.

All funds at that time were obtained from public subscription, with the government of the day contributing on a dollar for dollar basis—one dollar granted for every dollar subscribed. Later on, a rather unique sort of method was used to raise money, with the Tourist Transportation Tax, imposed by the government on all outgoing passengers. This source of funds remained till 1934, when a vote for the Tourist Bureau was put into the estimates.

It was still very inadequate—in fact, "Peg" Godden's work, the work of the cause of tourism in Newfoundland, has always suffered from lack of funds. Things are looking better now, and, since her appointment last April, as Assistant Director of the Bureau, she has been able to strike many a shrewd blow in the cause of "selling Newfoundland."

Since her office gets thousands of inquiries every year from prospective visitors, and she has only two stenographer assistants, it follows that she has to answer many of the inquiries herself. Hence, night after night, the midnight oil is burned in the office on the ground floor of Water Street East. One time she used to answer all letters personally. That was back in the early days, when a few hundred queries from people interested in a vacation or a hunting or fishing trip in Newfoundland made up the year's work. Some idea of how her press-agent job for Newfoundland as a tourist Mecca has paid off is shown by the

more than 16,000 letters received up to the end of March, 1951—covering a year's activities; also when it is stated that in the four months since March, the office has already received 8,500 letters.

It looks as though the Tourist Business for Newfoundland is picking up more and more momentum. And that is good news to "Peg" Godden. She's a dynamo of energy, nothing fazes her and she knows all the answers. She likes tourists and she likes what they like and what they are looking for—which is mainly the great outdoors.

The photo which accompanies this sketch of "Peg" Godden is quite 'in character'! She has fished in the best streams in the country, and hunted on the most famous 'barrens'. She's a hiker, in a day devoted to the automobile, perhaps recognizing that while this is a mechanized age, there's an awful lot of Newfoundland that even a horse can't reach. She was among a group of ten who inaugurated the Newfoundland Hiking Club with a forty-mile jaunt around the eastern end of the Avalon Peninsula.

But, for all her keenness about fishing and hunting, she's dead set against these things being carried to excess. To see that there is no excess killing, she recommends better training for local guides, and a greater appreciation of the need for conservation. She knows many guides personally, has sampled their cooking in outdoor camps, and knows just who and what to recommend to the motley array of visitors who arrive every year.

"Peg" gets so enthusiastic about Newfoundland, the tourist possi-

bilities, the things that ought to be done, that she gets her audience just as excited. She is very proud about any achievement by Newfoundlanders, in or out of the country, that may reflect on the country's fame and interest abroad. We

guess she's a patriot, not one of the traditional kind that the story-books describe, but the kind that sees sermons in stones, books in the running brooks, and every place in Newfoundland as a spot that can delight at least one stranger.

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# England In Twillingate

by DON W. S. RYAN

**I**N Hart's Cove in Twillingate is a little piece of land that is a bit of Old England.

It is still very fertile and, through the past coupe of centuries, it has yielded excellent crops of vegetables. Owner of this unique garden plot is Uncle Jimmy Primmer as he is known to his friends and neighbors.

The land is some 200 years old, and was brought all the way from the Old Country to the New by the pioneers of the Primmer family.

In those early eighteenth century days, when sailing ships and pioneer crews embarked on new fishing ventures to the New World Island, it was necessary to take along a good supply of ballast for safe sailing. Instead of rock, Skipper Primmer, one of the early pioneers of Twillingate Island, took along with him, when he came out each spring, a generous load of good old English soil.

When the ship reached the gaping harbor on the outer fringe of Twillingate Island, instead of dumping overboard the soil, the crew carried it ashore and set it out in a garden at the top of the beach. There it still is, as fertile as it was two centuries ago and still yielding excellent crops.

Mr. Primmer looks after his garden with a deep sense of ancestral pride, and keeps it in a high state of fertility by rotating his crops and treating the soil with organic fertilizer.



"UNCLE" JIMMY PRIMMER

At 83 he is still active and as nimble as a man half his age. He has been a veteran fisherman and sealer all his life and was shipwrecked no less than four times.

Not far from his garden, on a little craggy headland of the cove, is an old mill stone that also was brought over from the Old Country many, many years ago. For a number of years it lay on the shallow bottom of the harbor a few yards off shore until Mr. Primmer, with the help of a few more men, dragged it out of oblivion and set it up on this craggy point of land as a memorial to the early pioneers of Twillingate Island.

Visitors to Twillingate would indeed be rewarded with a visit to this unique garden with its leafy vegetables, to the old mill stone on the point a few yards away, and, above all, to Uncle Jimmy—if he's not too busy to have a heartwarming yarn with you!



**Str-i-i-ke One!!!**

**by DOUG SMITH**

O ooh that dirty robber . . .  
the horse thief . . . murder  
the bum . . . give the jerk a white  
cane and a dog . .

Wondering if it was Al Capone,  
Lucky Luciano or Captain Kidd  
the crowd were slandering, I peered  
in astonishment to find that it was  
a bloke who learned his three R's  
with me some years ago.

I couldn't for the life of me  
figure out how Jim, always a nice  
guy, had transgressed into such a  
loathing character. I quickly got  
hep. Jim was umpiring a base-  
ball game.

But such language! Not since  
I listened to an Italian mule driver  
bogged in a Naples ditch had I  
heard such choice epithets.

Twelve years ago when I sailed  
away with a gang to twist Adolph's  
ears, the cries on St. George's field  
and across Newfoundland were,  
"Oh, well played, sir," as the foot-  
ball lodged in the netting.

Now it was, "Kill the bum."  
What a change!

Later on, I bemoaned the infil-  
tration of American habits into our  
sporting life.

**SEPTEMBER, 1951**



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Two old timers nearby jumped me quickly. "Son," said one, "we wuz murdering umpires here in the days when an American was as strange as a Choctaw Indian. You don't need to go up and blamin' them Americans. Newfoundlanders wuz shaking their fists at umpires when you wuz shaking a rattle."

Confused by the onslaught, I stammered, "That's not true, we never had such scenes in Newfoundland before."

"Hah, lissen to the wet ears," snorted the Old Timer. "Reckon you ain't seen nothin'. Nothin' at all. You should've been around in '13 when Doc Pritchard, Harry Peddigrew and the boys wuz whoopin' it up on Stancombe's Field, Freshwater Road. Hah, then you really would've heard something."

I hastened to mention that I didn't recollect these years.

"Gettin' all excited over a few threats to a umpire," harangued the bleacher veteran. "You should've been around in '14 when the Shamrocks nosed out the Wanderers by four runs for the Allen trophy. Huh, there wuz enough bruises after that game to fill a bucket."

For the life of me, I couldn't figure out how many bruises it took to fill a bucket, so I let that one slide.

"Baseball, me boy, has always been with us," he rambled on. "I lost my shirt for three years running when the Red Lions did the trick in '19, '20 and '21."

**ATLANTIC GUARDIAN**



I begged off. It looked like baseball in Grand Falls, Corner Brook and St. John's had been here a mighty long time. If they wanted to kill the umpire in my father's day, and still desired to beat his brains out today, it was O.K. by me.

What impresses me most, though, is the change effected in people's minds through the influence of sport. Drop into any ice cream parlor and the kids today will be rattling off the averages of all the American and National League players. They will be rabidly arguing the demerits of ball players' actions in games played only twenty-four hours ago and more than 3,000 miles away.

Vainly do I scan the daily papers trying to find out if the Arsenal, Bolton Wanderers or Chelsea are on top. I might as well search for the cockfight results in Mexico.

Due, to a large extent, to sports, the Newfoundland youth is familiar with many phases of American life. The activities of English sporting fixtures are virtually unknown, along with a diminishing knowledge of the country and its people.

Which all adds up to the importance of sport in influencing tomorrow's citizens. As they participate in sport so they ally themselves in a common bond of understanding with other nationalities that think likewise.

Personally I don't mind yelling at the umpire. It is exciting at times. But I do miss, and would like to hear more of, "Play up, team, and play the game."

SEPTEMBER, 1951

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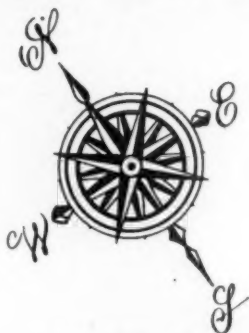


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## GUARDIAN of the Home



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### **"September"**

**T**HE month of September, 1796, is an outstanding period in Newfoundland history for, at that time, the last attempt by a foreign power to gain control of the strategic island was made. The foreign power was, of course, France, and the incident took place just after the Revolution and before Napoleon Bonaparte took power into his own hands.

When England formed the First Coalition against France in 1792, Newfoundland, like all other far-flung colonies of the British Empire, was open to attack, and plans were made for its defence. The forts were repaired and improved, the Royal Newfoundland Fencible Regiment was raised, and Volunteer Companies called into being.

By the fall of 1795, St. John's was in pretty good shape to withstand an attack if it should come, and, less than a year later, the threat finally became a reality. All through the summer of 1796, rumors were rife that a large French fleet was in North American waters, and a keen look-out was kept by all British men-o-war and fishing boats for any sign of the tricolor on a distant masthead.

It seemed that the danger season would pass in Newfoundland without the threatened attack, but, on the first of September, a signal was given for an enemy fleet to the southward. It proved to be the

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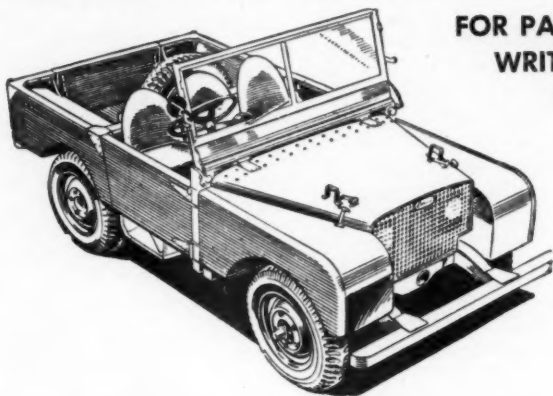
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French fleet under Admiral Citizen Richery, and consisted of seven ships-of-the-line, two frigates, and several other smaller craft.

The alarm was immediately given from Signal Hill and all the forts. There were only four British men-o-war in port, one 50-gun ship, two frigates, and a sloop of war. Governor Sir James Wallace at once proclaimed martial law, every man in the place fit for service was ordered to muster in front of the camp on the parade ground where they were enrolled and told off to forts and batteries.

In the meantime, the enemy fleet was standing off the coast in the vicinity of Cape Spear, apparently sizing up the situation before any attack. Governor Wallace, a shrewd military man, took advantage of their indecision, to move all the men and guns to the top of Signal Hill and the Southside Hills. The camps and movements of three to four thousand men as well as the guns must have had a chastening effect on the Admiral and his officers, when day broke on the second of September.

The French fleet spent the rest of that day doing a great deal of semaphore-telegraphing and boat-communication between the flagship and the rest. In the night they stood out to sea, but, on shore, reconnoitering parties were sent out in various directions to guard against any surprise landings. The chain across the Narrows was also raised, the great capstan at the South Side being assisted by three

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schooners placed at equal distances from Chain Rock. The schooner grappled the chain with their anchors and helped to heave it up. The schooners were also filled with combustible materials and it was intended to use them as fireships among the enemy fleet if they tried to enter the Narrows.

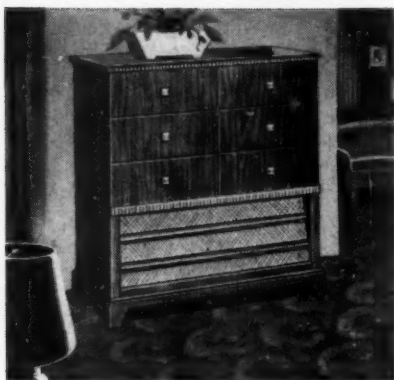
Red-hot shot was heated in the three furnaces previously built for that purpose at Fort Frederick, on the Southside inside of Fort Amherst, at Chain Rock Battery, and at Fort William, site of the Newfoundland Hotel.

All was now in readiness and a hot reception was in store for the enemy. On the third of September, 1796, the crucial moment arrived. Admiral Richery grappled with his indecision and decided to make the onslaught. With excitement and fear the St. John's people waited as the French stood in towards the Narrows, and the belief was that the enemy would attempt a landing.

And then when the ships in the van were within the extreme range of the guns of Fort Amherst, they suddenly turned, and, followed by the rest, stood off to sea and never returned to the attack, although they remained in sight for several days. At last they bore away for they southward. They put in at Bay Bulls and destroyed the settlement, driving the defenceless inhabitants to the woods.

So ended the last attempt by a foreign power to establish a foothold in Newfoundland.



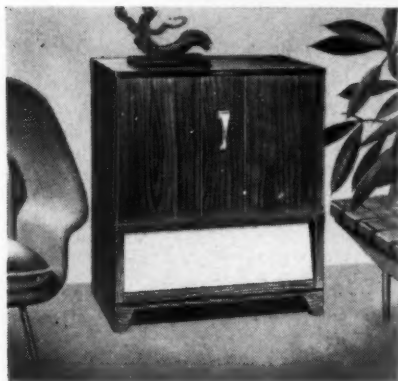


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